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## UNH Fall Initiatives Save Energy, Money, Emissions

Student Waste Watch Challenge, Thanksgiving "Powerdown" Save Nearly \$23,000; Reduce CO2 Emissions By 50 Metric Tons

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DURHAM, N.H. – University of New Hampshire (UNH) faculty, staff, and students saved over 159,000 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of energy, \$22,721 dollars in energy and water costs, and over 50 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions through the University's first ever Student Energy Waste Watch Challenge and its annual Thanksgiving "powerdown" initiative.

These energy and emissions savings are the equivalent of removing 10 cars from the road or lighting 127 New England homes for one year.

"These impressive efforts embrace values important to all of us in New Hampshire: saving money and helping save the environment," said John Aber, UNH vice president for research. "Once again, UNH shows that those values are not in conflict."

Hubbard Hall won the Student Energy Waste Watch Challenge, which rewards the top three residence halls or apartment complexes that reduce their per capita energy and water consumption by the largest percentage compared to their building's average usage from the past three years during the same time period. Hubbard lowered its energy consumption by nearly 29% and its water usage by 8% over its average October/November usage for the past three years. Hunter Hall and Smith Hall won second and third place, respectively.

In total, all UNH residence halls and apartments saved a combined 125,203 kwh and 286,802 gallons of water during the four-week fall Challenge, which ran October 25 to November 22. These savings translate into nearly \$18,000 less in energy and water costs, emissions savings equivalent to removing 8 cars from the road or lighting 100 New England homes for one year, and enough water to fill nearly half an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The Challenge will be repeated next March and April.

"The fact that students reduced their consumption by such a large margin was fantastic," said Chris Skoglund, the lead organizer of UNH's Student Energy Waste Watch Challenge and a graduate student at UNH. "And there is evidence that the positive impacts of the Challenge will continue," he added, noting that some students suggested altering the timing and intensity of lighting in their residence halls to permanently reduce energy usage.

"The Challenge has been extremely important to UNH because it has gotten students informed about, and involved with, our school's environmental initiatives. It was great to get others

involved with something I love,” said Hubbard resident Emily Cousineau ’08, one of the energy captains in each residence hall who volunteered to educate their peers about energy and water saving techniques.

By “powering down” – turning off computers, lights, office equipment, and electronics – for the Thanksgiving holiday break, UNH faculty, staff, and students saved more than 34,000 kwh (the amount of electricity needed to power 27 New England homes for a year), \$4,721 in energy costs, and greenhouse gas emissions reductions equivalent to removing two cars from the road for one year. Electronic equipment and appliances can draw 30 percent of their total energy use even when they are turned off but still plugged in.

“UNH has always been a leader regarding energy conservation,” said Matt O’Keefe, utilities project manager at the UNH Energy Office. “The great part about the powerdown initiative is that it brings to people’s attention the fact that most electronic equipment will still draw power when not in use.”

“The powerdown campaign built off the momentum and positive energy of the Student Energy Waste Watch Challenge,” said Sara Cleaves, associate director of the Office of Sustainability. “We told faculty and staff that if the students could do it, so could they, and together the UNH community demonstrated that small individual actions can add up to big energy and emissions savings.”

UNH is a leader in conserving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and integrating sustainability throughout its curricula, operations, research, and engagement efforts. Committed to being a climate protection campus, UNH has earned several awards for its sustainability initiatives, which range from composting and supporting local, sustainable agriculture to using compressed natural gas- and biodiesel-powered vehicles and being the first in the nation to receive an EPA Energy Star building rating for residence halls. More information is available at [www.sustainableunh.unh.edu](http://www.sustainableunh.unh.edu) and [www.unh.edu/etf](http://www.unh.edu/etf).